

a*49-9-7

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 9, Part 7, to create a Center of Excellence for Women's Health at the University of Tennessee-Memphis Health Sciences Center.

WHEREAS, women's health issues are of paramount concern to the citizens of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the paucity of clinical research and preventive medicine dedicated to women's health problems is indeed appalling; and

WHEREAS, nationally one (1) in eight (8) women is expected to contract breast cancer in her lifetime, a statistic which has doubled in the last twenty (20) years; and

WHEREAS, in 1989, breast cancer was the leading cause of cancer deaths for African-American women; and

WHEREAS, nationally, every three (3) minutes a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer, and every twelve (12) minutes a woman dies from the disease; and

WHEREAS, more than 950,000 U.S. women have died of breast cancer since 1960. This is twice the number of Americans who died in World War I and II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the Persian Gulf War combined; and

WHEREAS, because the tools to prevent and cure breast cancer do not exist, it is crucial that earlier methods of detection be developed to increase a woman's chances of surviving breast cancer; and

WHEREAS, mammograms are important because they can detect approximately eighty percent (80%) of all tumors. Mamograms do not prevent or cure the cancer, they can only detect the disease; and

WHEREAS, because women generally outlive men, they are increasingly likely to suffer from chronic illnesses or other disabilities that require continuing care for longer and longer periods. In 1980 there were eighty (80) men for each one hundred (100) women aged sixty-five (65) to sixty-nine (69), but only forty-four (44) men for each 100 women in the eighty-five (85) and over bracket; and

WHEREAS the incidence of acute conditions in women is twenty percent (20%) to thirty percent (30%) higher than in men. Also, women suffer from more nonfatal chronic conditions than men, and they show consistently higher rates of short-term disability; and

WHEREAS, of all fatal strokes, sixty-one percent (61%) occur in women; and

WHEREAS, because of this disturbing litany of statistics relative to women's health issues, and a host of other equally disturbing facts about women's health, it is time for this General Assembly to address this extremely important issue directly, and take appropriate measures to rectify our shortcomings in adequately funding women's health programs; now, therefore;

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 9, Part 7, is amended by adding the following language as a new Section 49-9-705:

Section 49-9-705. (a) There is hereby established a Center of Excellence for Women's Health at the University of Tennessee-Memphis Health Sciences Center. The mission of the Center of Excellence for Women's Health shall be to conduct clinical and statistical research and to identify and recommend preventative and other early detection and intervention medical procedures for women's health issues.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 1995, the public welfare requiring it.